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**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
DISTRICT OF UTAH**

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,  Plaintiff,  v.  ERIC NICHOLAS GAPCO,  Defendant.	<b>UNITED STATES' POSITION REGARDING DETENTION</b>    Case No. 2:24-MJ-00728-DBP
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- ☐ The United States is not seeking detention.
- ☐ Detention is not at issue because this is an immigration reentry case where the defendant has opted to participate in the fast-track program, which includes agreeing to detention for the pendency of this case.
- ☒ The United States moves for detention based on current information. The United States' positions in this preliminary pleading could change after reviewing the Pretrial Report or learning of additional evidence. The United States reserves the right to assert positions even if the boxes next to those positions are not checked below, raise additional arguments, and file additional pleadings in support of detention. The United States' motion for detention is:
- ☒ Pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 3142(f)(1) because defendant is charged with:
- ☒ (A) a crime of violence (*see* 18 U.S.C. § 3156(a)(4)), a violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1591 (sex trafficking of children), or an offense under § 2332b(g)(5)(B) (specific enumerated crimes) for which a maximum term of imprisonment of

- 10 years or more is prescribed<sup>1</sup>; **or**
- ☐ **(B)** an offense for which the maximum sentence is life imprisonment or death; **or**
- ☐ **(C)** an offense for which a maximum term of imprisonment of 10 years or more is prescribed in the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. §§ 801-904), the Controlled Substances Import and Export Act (21 U.S.C. §§ 951-971), or Chapter 705 of Title 46, U.S.C. (46 U.S.C. §§ 70501-70508); **or**
- ☐ **(D)** any felony if the defendant has been convicted of two or more offenses described in (a) through (c) above, or two or more State or local offenses that would have been offenses described in (a) through (c) above if a circumstance giving rise to Federal jurisdiction had existed, or a combination of such offenses; **or**
- ☐ **(E)** any felony that is not otherwise a crime of violence but involves: **(i)** a minor victim; **(ii)** the possession or use of a firearm or destructive device (as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 921); **(iii)** any other dangerous weapon; or **(iv)** a failure to register under 18 U.S.C. § 2250;

**OR**

☒ Pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 3142(f)(2) because the case involves:

- ☒ **(A)** a serious risk the defendant will flee; **or**
- ☐ **(B)** a serious risk the defendant will obstruct or attempt to obstruct justice, or threaten, injure, intimidate, attempt to threaten, injure or intimidate a prospective witness or juror.

**Procedure**

The defendant may seek a continuance of the detention hearing of up to five days, and the United States may seek a continuance of up to three days. 18 U.S.C. § 3142(f). During any such continuance, the defendant shall be detained. *Id.* The rules concerning the admissibility of evidence do not apply at the detention hearing. *Id.* The United States has the burden of persuasion by clear and convincing evidence that no condition or combination of conditions of release will reasonably assure the safety of any other person and the community or by a preponderance of evidence that no condition or combination of conditions of release will reasonably assure the defendant's appearance as required. *Id.*; *United States v. Cisneros*, 328 F.3d 610, 616 (10<sup>th</sup> Cir. 2003).

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<sup>1</sup> The United States concedes that it is an arguable question whether a violation of 49 U.S.C. § 46504 (Interference with a Flight Crew by Assault or Intimidation) is a crime of violence, inasmuch as it is debatable whether it has as an *element* the use, attempted use, or threatened use of physical force against the person or property of another. *See United States v. Diaz*, 865 F.3d 168, 178 (4<sup>th</sup> Cir. 2017) (49 U.S.C. § 46504 not a crime of violence under force clause of 18 U.S.C. § 16(a) for purposes of mandatory restitution statute).

### Rebuttable Presumption

- ☐ A rebuttable presumption applies, and the defendant bears the burden to produce some credible evidence to rebut this presumption. The United States acknowledges that it retains the burden of persuasion. The statutory presumption applies:
  - ☐ Pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 3142(e)(2) (*previous violator*): There is a rebuttable presumption that no condition or combination of conditions will reasonably assure the safety of any other person and the community because:
    - (A) the defendant has previously been convicted of a Federal offense that is described in 18 U.S.C. § 3142(f)(1), or of a State or local offense that would have been such an offense if a circumstance giving rise to Federal jurisdiction had existed; **and**
    - (B) the defendant committed that offense while on release pending trial for a Federal, State, or local offense; **and**
    - (C) a period of not more than five years has elapsed since the date of conviction, or the release of the defendant from imprisonment, for that, whichever is later.
  - ☐ Pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 3142(e)(3) (*narcotics, firearm, other offenses*): There is a rebuttable presumption that no condition or combination of conditions will reasonably assure the appearance of the defendant as required and the safety of the community because there is probable cause to believe that the defendant committed one or more of the following offenses:
    - ☐ (A) an offense for which a maximum term of imprisonment of 10 years or more is prescribed in the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. §§ 801-904), the Controlled Substances Import and Export Act (21 U.S.C. §§ 951-971), or Chapter 705 of Title 46, U.S.C. (46 U.S.C. §§ 70501-70508);
    - ☐ (B) an offense under 18 U.S.C. §§ 924(c), 956(a), or 2332b;
    - ☐ (C) an offense listed in 18 U.S.C. § 2332b(g)(5)(B) for which a maximum term of imprisonment of 10 or more is prescribed;
    - ☐ (D) an offense under Chapter 77 of Title 18, U.S.C. (18 U.S.C. §§ 1581-1597) for which a maximum term of imprisonment of 20 years or more is prescribed; **or**
    - ☐ (E) an offense involving a minor victim under 18 U.S.C. §§ 1201, 1591, 2241, 2242, 2244(a)(1), 2245, 2251, 2251A, 2252(a)(1), 2252(a)(2), 2252(a)(3), 2252A(a)(1), 2252A(a)(2), 2252A(a)(3), 2252A(a)(4), 2260, 2421, 2422, 2423, or 2425.

### Factors to Be Considered

The United States may present arguments, proffer evidence, or provide testimony at the scheduled detention hearing supporting the detention of the defendant including, but not limited to:

- ☒ The nature and circumstances of the offense charged, including whether the offense is a crime of violence, a violation of section 1591, a Federal crime of terrorism, or involves a minor victim or a controlled substance, firearm or destructive device. (18 U.S.C. § 3142(g)(1)).

The defendant engaged in disruptive and life-threatening behavior on a commercial aircraft. He would not remain in his seat as directed by flight attendants, attempted to take the crew jump seat of a flight attendant, propositioned a flight attendant for sex, was repeatedly being loud, yelling, vaping, bothering other passengers, and being non-compliant. Twice he attempted to open an exterior door of the aircraft while it was in flight. Opening a door on an in-flight aircraft would have catastrophic consequences for the safety of the passengers and the plane. The defendant had to be restrained by flight attendants with the assistance of other passengers. Even under restraint, he was non-compliant and had to be restrained with restraints on both his hands and lower legs. The aircraft was diverted from its intended destination of Dallas, Texas, and landed in Salt Lake City due to the danger presented by the defendant.

He continued to engage in violent and erratic behavior after being arrested upon landing in Salt Lake City. He was combative with officers and broke the glass in door of a holding cell at the airport operations center. He was taken to the hospital for medical evaluation, where he continued to be belligerent combative with medical staff and the police. At one point, he spat on an officer.

- ☒ The weight of evidence against the defendant. (18 U.S.C. § 3142(g)(2)).
- ☒ The history and characteristics of the defendant including the defendant's character, physical and mental condition, family ties, employment, financial resources, length of residence in the community, community ties, past conduct, history relating to drug or alcohol abuse, criminal history and record concerning court proceedings. (18 U.S.C. § 3142(g)(3)(A)).

The defendant may have self-reported PTSD. The United States does not know if the defendant is under treatment. The defendant reportedly attempted to give another passenger a bag of unknown pills, which the other passenger refused. Arresting officers asked the defendant if he had consumed any illegal narcotic or prescription medication. The defendant initially he stated he had not but later stated he had eaten approximately ten marijuana edibles and that he was not sure of the THC milligrams content for each of the edibles. The defendant's apparent place of residence is New

Jersey, and he has no ties to this jurisdiction.

- ☐ Whether, at time of the current offense or arrest, the defendant was on probation, parole, or other release pending trial, sentencing, appeal, or completion of sentence for an offense under Federal, State, or local law. (18 U.S.C. § 3142(g)(3)(B)).
- ☒ The nature and seriousness of danger to any person or to the community that would be posed by the defendant's release. (18 U.S.C. § 3142(g)(4)).
- ☐ The defendant's lack of legal status in the United States.
- ☐ How the defendant might be subject to removal or deportation after serving a period of incarceration.
- ☐ The defendant's significant family or other ties outside of the United States.
- ☐ The defendant's use of aliases or false documents.
- ☐ The defendant's prior attempts to evade law enforcement.
- ☒ How the defendant's proposed residence, employment, or proposed treatment programs have not been verified.
- ☐ The defendant's prior failures to appear for court proceedings.
- ☐ Other reasons including:

#### **Victim Notification**

- ☒ The United States has notified any identified victim, or attempted to do so, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 3771.

The position of the victim(s) on the detention of the defendant is: Victim Delta Airlines and its victim employees take no position on detention. The position of passenger victims is not yet known. The Court will be further advised at the hearing.

☒ The victim(s) in this matter seek(s) a no contact order. Final determination pending. The United States is asserting this right on behalf of the victims.

☐ This matter does not involve a victim requiring notification.

DATED this 22nd day of July, 2024.

TRINA A. HIGGINS  
UNITED STATES ATTORNEY

/s/ Michael Kennedy

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